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Lessons of the Election

1. Democratic Landslide

IT IS admitted by all shades of opinion here and abroad that the predominating feature of the elections was the unprecedented electoral vote for Roosevelt. The Popular Front for the Democratic candidate embraced virtually the entire working class, W.P.A.er's and P.W.A.er's, and the Negroes on the left, a large part of the farmers, professional, white-collar and other middle-class groups as well as a significant section of monopoly capital itself. For better or for worse, for one reason or another, the hopes of 26 millions—from the most exploited to the top-most exploiters—were focussed in some degree upon the Squire of Hyde Park.

The causes of Roosevelt's victory are not difficult to discern. The fundamental reason for his return to office is to be found in the sustained speculative and industrial boom that kept swelling during the campaign and mounted to higher levels upon the news of his reelection. Just as Roosevelt was the beneficiary of the depression in 1932, so he reaped the political harvest of the boom in 1936.

Their hopes revived, their fears diminished, or their appetites whetted by the rising tide of prosperity, the twenty-six millions looked to Roosevelt to lead them farther out of the desert, in which they were wandering in 1932, into green pastures. The masses appreciate bold and determined leadership, and, whatever one's opinion about the direction and quality of Roosevelt's regime, in contrast to Hoover's do-nothing policy, he did provide that in the first critical months of his administration. The enormous vote of the electorate paid unconscious tribute to that fact.

There were, however, far more material reasons for Roosevelt's victory. The desire of Farley's henchmen to keep or get jobs; the propaganda and pressure of the labor leaders, aided by the Old Guard and the Communist party, to line up the labor vote for Roosevelt; the administrative pressure upon the unemployed and farmers on the relief rolls; the fear that their doles might be discontinued; the refinancing aid and subsidies given to farmers and home-owners; these and similar powerful political and economic pressure contributed to swell the vote for Roosevelt.

But why, in view of the rabid campaign in the conservative press against the "Democratic Dictator," did magnates like Owen D. Young, A. P. Giannini, Walter Teagle, and many others back Roosevelt? The answer was given by the NEW YORK TIMES in its editorial

captioned, "A Reasoned Choice," which presented "three dominant considerations why the public welfare will best be served by the continuance of the Democratic party in power and by the re-election of the President." (Note that unlike the labor fakers the TIMES places the Democratic party first and its chief second.)

First: "Mr. Roosevelt is a keen enough judge of public opinion to make his second administration more conservative than his first." That is to say: the crisis is over and with it the radical phase of the Roosevelt regime. Now that prosperity is at hand, and the Supreme Court has killed the AAA and NRA, "products of the panic period," the time has come to consolidate the gains made and not embark on any more un-American experiments. Second: "in a very fundamental way the President's reelection will provide insurance against radicalism of the sort which the United States has most to fear." The period ahead, despite the return of prosperity, is not going to be one of civil peace, as some optimists imagine, but of industrial strife, relief riots, and a growth of radicalism. Roosevelt has shown that he is capable of handling such problems to the satisfaction of the most enlightened capitalists. Finally, and most important of all, Roosevelt's foreign policy is preferable to the "narrow nationalism" of the Republican party, preferable that is, to that part of finance capital which wants tariffs lowered in certain cases and a firm armament and imperialist policy in all cases.

These arguments for supporting Roosevelt are infinitely more correct than the corresponding rationalizations of the labor leaders, liberals, and Stalinists. The NEW YORK TIMES, like its London and Paris counterparts, is the authentic voice of the big bourgeoisie. When the TIMES uses the editorial "we," it speaks for the rulers of America, who in turn look to their chief organ for political guidance and information. The editorial staff of the TIMES has to know—and with its access to all avenues of private and public, national and international information does know—who's who and what's what. We submit that, next to Roosevelt's speech in defense of capitalism, the TIMES editorial was the most important political document issued during the campaign.

2. The Republican Rout

Although Landon was buried under an avalanche of electoral votes, it must be remembered that he received more votes than any other Republican presidential candidate and approximately forty percent of the total cast. The Republican vote signifies that more than fifteen mil-

lion people are opposed even to the mild reform program of the New Deal, required to adapt the capitalist regime to the conditions of the crisis. This is a cohesive conservative bloc of formidable proportions.

The Republican standpatters presented no positive program but contented themselves with a purely negative criticism of the New Deal. Such a tactic can be successful, as Roosevelt demonstrated in 1932, only if the decisive masses of the electorate are thoroughly disgusted and disillusioned with the existing order. Such was not the case this year. At bottom, the Republicans were defeated by the boom.

A noticeable feature was the almost total lack of labor support in the Republican camp. Only a few petrified reactionaries like Hutcheson, czar of the Carpenter's Union, dared display themselves under the reactionary Republican banner in 1936 where even John L. Lewis stood eight years before.

3. The Union Party Fade-Out

The small vote cast for the Coughlin-Smith-Townsend candidate, Lemke, dealt a fatal blow to that hastily-improvised demagogic movement aimed at the dissatisfied sections of the middle classes. Gagged by the Church which dispatched Cardinal Pacelli from Rome to make peace with Roosevelt, Coughlin has temporarily retired from the political stage, shouting that he has been betrayed, like Jesus, by millions of his disciples, who pledged to follow his guidance. The National Union for Social Justice is to be disbanded. Meanwhile, Huey Long's successor, Gerald K. Smith, continues to fish in troubled waters for suckers to join or subsidize his fascistic movement.

Although the germs of Fascism are latent in our social system, the conditions are not yet ripe for the growth of the malignant mass movement in this country. The social crisis of 1929-1932 has been temporarily overcome. Hope and not fear is the pervasive mood among the masses. The working class, safely harnessed to Roosevelt's triumphal chariot by Lewis and his colleagues, is not yet threatening to overturn the existing order.

The Republican rout and the Union party fade-out, each in its own way, proves the utter falsity of the Communist contention that fascism or semi-fascist reaction was the main danger in 1936. Even intelligent liberal reporters like Paul Ward and others on the NATION flatly asserted before election that neither had any chance of defeating Roosevelt. The result completely confirmed the revolutionary Socialist position that the Stalinists had invented a scarecrow out of the Landon-Hearst-Liberty League-Lemke combination in order to dupe and frighten their followers into voting for the Democratic party as the "lesser evil."

4. The Stalinist "Victory"

The Communist press can, and does, claim a victory in this campaign. They succeeded in "defeating Landon at all costs." But it was a Pyrrhic victory; another such and they are lost. What a price the Stalinists paid for their left-handed support of Roosevelt!

First of all, their devious manoeuvres and duplicity, the equivocal and apologetic character of their propaganda demoralized their members and alienated many of their sympathizers. Doubtless, every comrade who took an active part in the campaign can cite cases of the utter confusion prevailing in the Stalinist ranks concerning their position. To vote for the John Brown of Kansas or the Prince of Peace Progress, and Prosperity from Hyde Park? That was the simple and direct question no Stalinist could answer simply and directly.

But the results gave the answer. Why did the C.P. poll such an astonishingly small vote in their stronghold, New York? The Stalinists expected for the first time to exceed the Socialist vote; one prominent Stalinist confided to Norman Thomas that he expected 250,000 votes in New York. But when the votes were counted Thomas had 70,000, Laidler 80,000; while both Browder and Minor had less than the 50,000 needed to keep them on the ballot. The discrepancy between Browder's 32,000 votes in New York City and the 60,000 for Amter, the Communist candidate for Board of Alderman, shows where the Communist vote went. The Stalinists lost their votes to the Democrats, the A.L.P., and, according to the N.Y. TIME and SUN, also to the Socialists, "because many former followers of the Communist Party considered the new Communist line to be opportunistic." Thanks to their propaganda and instruction as well as the harsh electoral restrictions upon minority parties, the C.P. succeeded in double-crossing itself off the ballot.

Although the Stalinists have tried to save their faces by claiming a victory, in reality they emerged from the campaign with a black eye. Although they mobilized far greater forces and resources than the Socialists could command, they lacked the one essential ingredient, a consistent political line. (The debacle of the Stalinists contains this lesson for every Socialist.) A party that is unable to stand upon its own feet and its own program is already far along on the road to liquidation.

5. Labor's Love Lost

An even more instructive aspect of the campaign was the work of Labor's "Non-Partisan" League and its Empire State offspring, the American Labor party. This election gave American Socialists their first opportunity to see a labor party setup in action on the American political arena. 1936 foreshadowed the shape of things to come.

More than any other organization next to the Democratic Committee itself, Labor's "Non-Partisan" league was responsible for the Roosevelt sweep. In the key industrial states, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and elsewhere, the hard-riding range-bosses of the C.I.O. used every possible means of pressure and propaganda to corral the labor vote for Roosevelt—and, lest we forget, Garner.

In many states Labor's Non-Partisan League was part and parcel of the Democratic machine. In New York, however, where Tammany has a hundred and fifty years old franchise, the Lewisites assumed a separate name and apparatus, although they pursued the same policy—and methods. The American Labor party recruited into its ranks about 250,000 trade unionists, received about 250,000 votes; and collected about 250,000 dollars. It has therefore about three times the organizational strength of the Socialist party.

Let us look at its record. First, it unconditionally endorsed three capitalist candidates and stumped for them. Second, it presented no demands of its own to the President or Governor. When New York Socialist trade-unionists demanded that Dubinsky and Hillman at least request Lehman to liberate the four labor political prisoners in Sing-Sing as part payment for their support, the labor bureaucrats together with the Stalinist leaders quashed the attempt. They raised no slogans of their own and stifled any efforts to criticize the Democratic candidates. In every sense of the word, these labor lieutenants acted as the flunkies of the capitalist class. I can understand the motives of a man who sells his vote for two dollars, said Norman Thomas, but who can respect people like Dubinsky who give everything for nothing, nay, even pay for the privilege!

Labor's Non-Partisan League played a thoroughly reactionary role in this campaign. In depicting the author of the "merit clause" as the friend of labor, it facilitated Roosevelt's strike-strangling activities in the future. In hailing the billion-dollar war budget chief as a peace-lover, they aid the ideological preparation to line up labor on the side of American imperialism in the coming conflict. In concentrating their criticism upon the Republicans, who have little power, they shield the equally reactionary Democrats who hold power in most states and above all at Washington. In drawing class-conscious workers away from the Socialist party, by the false and fatal argument of choosing "the lesser evil," they retard the revolutionary political education of the vanguard of American labor. Such is the first page in the history of the labor party movement in the United States.

The local labor and farmer-labor setups that sprouted here and there throughout the country mostly under C.P. sponsorship died aborning. All these tender saplings were uprooted by the Roosevelt hurricane. So much for the C.P. insistence that the American masses were demanding above all things in 1936 a "genuine mass-class farmer-labor party" to "save them from war and Fascism, and promote peace, progress, and prosperity." They got it but under the familiar shopkeeper's sign of the Democratic party. The professional politicians of the established Farmer-Labor machines in Minnesota and Wisconsin who made their peace with Roosevelt were allowed to reign in their little Iberian villages on condition that they supported Caesar at Rome.

The Old Guard organizations in Bridgeport and Reading which broke away from the S.P. at the beginning of the campaign suffered a cruel fate. McLevy's five sales-tax stalwarts in the Connecticut legislature were replaced by deserving Democrats and a like disaster was inflicted upon the Reading representatives. Even the split with the Socialist party could not save the offices the municipal Socialists valued above pearls, rubies, and principles.

6. The Socialist Campaign

The Socialist party waged a valiant and honorable struggle against great odds and terrific pressure in the 1936 campaign. Despite splits and betrayals, slanders and attacks from the Old Guard, the Stalinists, and the Lewisites, our party alone among the labor parties held aloft the banner of Socialism and took a definite class position on the other basic issue confronting the American masses today, the war question. Many details of the conduct of the campaign can and ought to be severely criticized; but to ignore the central facts would be to throw out the baby with the bath.

On the credit side of the ledger we can also register the heartening vote in New York. The bloc of 70-80 thousand votes is a mass base for the further growth of the party in this key state. The Madison Square Garden meeting showed the youthful vitality and militant spirit of the party at its best. Despite a late start, the work among the intellectuals carried on by the Thomas-Nelson Independent Committee demonstrated that the revolutionary changes within the S.P. have already attracted many leading intellectuals formerly sympathetic to the C.P. and will, if carried through consistently, win away many more in the near future.

On the debit side must be recorded the small national vote. The complex causes for the drop cannot be examined here but they should furnish plenty of food for reflection in the months to come. The scanty success of the Thomas-Nelson Labor Committee indicated that the party must begin to build from the ground up in the trade-union field by means of Socialist fractions.

A black spot upon the record was the failure of the

SOCIALIST CALL to function satisfactorily as the national campaign organ of the party. It is to be understood that under the present editorial staff, the CALL will be altogether different from what it was during the campaign.) The CALL lacked both a brain and a backbone. Instead of dealing with all the vital issues agitating the labor movement; distinguishing the revolutionary Socialist position from that of other parties; and giving a clear and consistent line to guide the comrades and rally sympathetic workers to the Socialist cause, the CALL equivocated, or avoided definite commitments. An air of indecision and of ethereal abstraction from living reality pervaded its pages. Instead of meeting the attacks of our opponents, the CALL chose to ignore them. These ostrich tactics could hardly be expected to arouse the enthusiasm of the party members—and what does not interest the party rank-and-file cannot be expected to appeal to its potential sympathizers. The CALL'S attitude of provincial isolation in regard to Spain and the Moscow trials was unforgiveable.

The root of the flabbiness of the CALL lay in its lack of political clarity and consistency. This in turn reflected the confusion within the party as a whole. But this is a question to consider and solve elsewhere.

With all these reservations and criticisms, the balance-sheet of the campaign showed a considerable net gain of political credit and prestige for the party, despite the tremendous drop in its vote, which can be converted into coin in the future provided the party continues along the road of revolutionary Socialism.

With one noteworthy exception, the reception of the results in the chief world capitals was a replica on an international scale of the reception within the United States. Just as almost every political tendency here saw in Roosevelt only that aspect most pleasing to them, so foreign officials stressed that aspect of his victory most favorable to their viewpoint. Conservative, labor and liberal England saw in it the vindication of the method of Anglo-Saxon democracy; Rome and Berlin saw in the Democratic sweep the triumph of the "leadership principle"; Moscow saw in it an aid to peace since Roosevelt is supposed to be a better friend of the Soviet Union than Landon—or the international working class. This universal flattery expressed the desire of the second-rate powers to be on friendly terms with the capitalist colossus and its chief, especially in view of the conflicts ahead.

President Roosevelt also received a cable of congratulations from Leon Blum, head of the Socialist party of France, saluting his victory as a triumph of democracy. This was a purely gratuitous political action on Blum's part. There was no official reason why, as Premier of the Popular Front Cabinet, Blum had to congratulate the head of the American Popular Front cabinet. (That is the function of the President of the French Republic, who exists for but two other purposes: to act as figure head at official functions—and to be assassinated periodically.) In view of the intransigent opposition of the American Socialist party to Roosevelt and his policies in the campaign, Blum's action can only be interpreted as a direct and premeditated slap in the face to our party. Blum's attitude reflects the general attitude of the Labor and Socialist International.

7. Some Political Perspectives

Given this analysis of the election results, what can be forecast for the immediate future? The character of the second Roosevelt administration has in our opinion, been correctly predicted by the TIMES: it will become increasingly conservative. Why not? Although Labor's Non-Partisan League leaders are responsible for Roosevelt, he is not responsible to them. He has given no

specific pledges to labor, or for that matter to any other group. Thanks to the scope of his victory, Roosevelt is free to take the next steps in "consolidating the gains of his administration."

"No one in the United States," he proudly proclaimed on October 23rd, "believes more firmly than in the system of private business, private property, and private profits." And no one, let us add, is readier to act more firmly to protect its interests.

Securely installed in office, Roosevelt will be more and more inclined to make peace with the masters of capital by balancing the budget, decreasing taxes, placating the power trust, etc. Simultaneously he will turn his back upon the unemployed, cutting down relief and repressing militant actions on the part of workers and unemployed. His administration will speed up military preparations. Continued concessions to his right, pretty phrases, promises, and repressive measures to the left: such is the most likely policy of the administration. Already three weeks after election 40,000 employed on W.P.A. are being laid off in New York.

The huge size of the Democratic majority is misleading. The Democratic party is today unwieldy and heterogeneous, composed of incompatible elements which must sooner or later collide, not only with each other, but with the President's policies. Roosevelt cannot at one and the same time satisfy the bankers and business men by lowering taxes and balancing the budget and keep the unemployed on the relief rolls at their present status. He cannot in critical strike situations play ball with both bosses and workers for an extended period. The multitude of frictions within the Democratic camp must lead to its disintegration on both the right and the left. The walkout of Smith and Davis was but an anticipation; and, as left-wing labor's discontent and disillusion with the Democrats increase, as they must, it will not be so easy to hold the rank-and-file in line.

It will not be the first time in American history that the height of the organizational strength of the Democratic party coincided with the beginning of its decline. In 1836 Van Buren, like Roosevelt, was swept into office during a period of prosperity. By 1840 the Democratic party was split into four parts and the Whigs took over the government. To be sure, the panic of 1837 intervened—but who will guarantee that the next four years of the Roosevelt regime will be without catastrophic political or economic crises?

Those who predict the death and disappearance of the Grand Old party are burying a lively corpse. Not only is the Republican party still supported by forty percent of the electorate, as we have pointed out, but it has a genuine political reason for existence: it is by tradition and capacity the most direct and dependable political representative of the ruling class in our society. Like a seasoned actor, ousted by his former understudy, the Grand Old party is but waiting in the wings, hoping that the leading man now in the spot-light will break his neck so that he can replace him as of yore. A new crisis will again put the Republicans in a position to make a real bid for power. But it also holds real dangers. For the next crisis will give a powerful impetus to the resurgence of radical petty-bourgeois movements of the Coughlin, Townsend, Lemke variety, and, even more alarmingly, to potentially revolutionary movements of labor on the political arena.

The Communist party, on the other hand, no longer has any real political or organizational reasons for independent existence. Long dependent for its policies on the exigencies of the foreign policies of the Soviet bureaucracy, that policy is today demanding its complete and final liquidation. Today the C.P. is hunting everywhere for a

pretext and an excuse for hastening its dissolution. Nevertheless, Socialists must be prepared for an overnight shift in C.P. policy in case of a sudden change in the field of world politics (rupture of the Franco-Soviet pact, the Spanish crisis, etc.). The dissatisfaction accumulating within the C.P., combined with the advance of the ideas of revolutionary socialism within the S.P., will enable us to recruit more rapidly from C.P. ranks in the future. In this way we will assist the Stalinists in carrying through the work of liquidation which they have so efficiently begun in the past year.

The future of the American Labor party movement remains ambiguous. 1936 was a dress-rehearsal for Lewis and his associates and indicates to a considerable degree what kind of political roles they may be expected to play in the days before us. Three roads open before them. First, to continue as the spare wheel in the Democratic chariot and to support the Democratic crown prince, Earle of Pennsylvania, in 1940 as they did F.D.R. in 1936. Second, to strike out as an independent political machine. Third, to be still-born. It is not at all excluded that a labor party on the English and Belgian models may never flourish for any period in the United States. It is not written in any divine decree that American workers who come to political maturity in an epoch of wars and revolutions are obliged to repeat all the stages of development—and errors—of their Old World brethren.

It is the main task of the revolutionary vanguard to shorten mass reformist developments by their activity and propaganda; and here we conclude upon the most important of all questions for the future: the course of our own party. The powerful impulse within labor's ranks for militant, independent political action was stifled in 1936 by Labor's Non-Partisan League and its allies. How can revolutionary socialism best revive, strengthen, and direct that impulse into the most progressive channels? The results of the elections demonstrated in our opinion that the prime source of the strength of the S.P. lay in its political position and program. Our opponents had greater resources and forces, and yet, it was they, and not we, who were on the defensive during the campaign.

In our judgment the Socialist party can progress along only one road, the revolutionary road. The circumstances in which we operate do not allow us any other choice, even if we should care to take it. The S.P. must become the revolutionary party of the American working class, or it will perish ignobly. The S.P. cannot compete with stronger and more firmly established organizations like the A.L.P. and the C.P. on a reformist basis—whatever reservations are privately made. Those who seek reformist policies, will go to the manufacturers and merchants of the most unadulterated brands.

Conversely, the leftward moving radical workers will go where the revolutionary banner is most proudly and clearly displayed. To exist, to grow, to reap the harvest of the inevitable disillusion of the most progressive workers with Roosevelt and his call-boys, and to become, in reality as well as in intention, the revolutionary vanguard of American labor, our party must first of all formulate and adopt a clear and consistent program along revolutionary Socialist lines, that will distinguish it unmistakably from all others on the American scene. Upon the foundation of these principles, the party in common work and discussion must elaborate a concrete program of action that will enable us to penetrate deeper into the mass organizations in every field and to become, not only the militant leaders of the advanced workers in their daily struggles, but their guides in showing them the only way out of the Inferno of capitalism.

Such to our mind is the principal lesson of the 1936 elections for revolutionary socialists. The time is at hand to draw all the necessary practical conclusions from it.

P.O.U.M. and the Spanish Revolution

Editorial Statement

A TRAGIC aspect of the Spanish revolution that is frequently obscured by the emphasis on the failure of the Socialist and Communist leaders, is the role played by the P.O.U.M., the "Workers Party of Marxian Unification."

Many placed great hopes in the P.O.U.M. in the period preceding the outbreak of the civil war, and these hopes were sustained by the belief that the defects in the policy and leadership of this party would be burned out like so much dross in the crucible of the conflict itself. The party had rejected the social reformism of the Second International. It had broken with the bureaucratic centrism of the Third International. It had in its ranks men and women associated with the best revolutionary Marxian traditions in Spain. Many were and are the aspects of its program and activity which placed this party at the left wing of the organized labor movement of Spain, and above all of its industrial heart, Catalonia.

The passage of week after week of the civil war, however, cannot but have proved disillusioning insofar as these hopes are concerned. The present leadership of the P.O.U.M. has, thus far, at least, proved incapable of rising to the stature which a bold Marxian leadership would attain under circumstances so highly favorable to the working class as those at hand in Spain today. The social democrats and Stalinists are the frankly avowed barriers on the road to the proletarian revolution in Spain. Both of them formally forbid the workers to play an independent class role or to aspire to an independent class goal. Bourgeois democracy, they proclaim, is all you are now allowed to strive towards; whoever tells the working class to fight for its own power, for the rule of labor, for socialism, is—a provocateur and an agent of Franco (or Hitler, or Hearst).

Yet the P.O.U.M. leadership, which opposes these two parties, cannot rightly claim a sufficient superiority to them to warrant the title of genuine leadership of the proletariat. Precisely because it knew better in the past, precisely because more was and should have been expected of it, its present line of conduct is all the more reprehensible and disastrous. What it is doing and what it is failing to do, show that in a critical situation the half-way measures and half-way policies characteristic of all species of Centrism, have a natural habit of wreaking havoc on the cause of socialism.

The P.O.U.M. sailed along for a lengthy period with the "socialist democratic revolution" as the main slogan on its masthead. Did this mean the fight for "democracy" (and if so, for whom?) or for socialism? Or did it mean both? The answer proved to be the one that life has given to such confusion in the past: it meant neither. The criticism of its ambiguities made by the consistent Marxists, was met by the P.O.U.M. leadership with a contemptuous shrug of the shoulders in the direction of the "sectarians."

But these ambiguities led the P.O.U.M. heads right into the camp of People's Frontism—that marvelous invention for canalizing the independent labor movement back under the control of the "democratic" bourgeoisie. In the February elections, when both S.P. and C.P. sold their birthright of independence for a mess of parliamentary seats doled out to them by the bourgeois politicians, the P.O.U.M. ended by joining the People's Front and signing its name to the bourgeois platform. For the sake of momentary "popularity" (and a seat in parliament), the

P.O.U.M. robbed itself of a great moral authority in combatting People's Frontism in the ranks of labor. Later events showed that its "lapse" was not accidental or momentary.

In the civil war, the P.O.U.M. membership and leadership has fought with exemplary bravery and determination. Many are its warriors cut down by Fascist machine-guns. The party's leader, Joaquin Maurin, also fell at the front, a proletarian hero. But courage and determination alone do not suffice, as was shown by the Austrian Socialist leaders in 1934, and by the social democratic and Stalinist leaders in Spain today. In the decisive question of **policy**, the P.O.U.M. leadership has played an intolerable and indefensible role, particularly in Catalonia, the seat of the party's strength.

It is there that the new workers' power was first organized. It was there, at the outbreak of the civil war, that the workers spontaneously armed, took over factories, banks, land, and means of transportation, and organized **their own** organs of power with which to control and administer what they had taken over. By the side of the old bourgeois power, they had set up the workers' power—a bristling challenge to the old order and a guarantee (the only effective guarantee) of the new. In the Russia of 1917, this situation came to be known as the "dual power"—the only possible organized socialist challenge of the working class to their old masters.

The bourgeoisie, in such a situation, can restore its old power only by rapidly or gradually dissolving or (as they did in Germany and Austria in 1918-1919) "absorbing" and negating the "dual" power of the proletariat. Whoever helps them in this to any extent is a traitor to the revolution.

Yet, this process of "absorbing" the dual power, of devitalizing it, is just what is taking place now in Catalonia. The P.O.U.M. leadership, does not resist this process. Its representative, Nin, despite opposition in the P.O.U.M. ranks, has entered as Minister of Justice into the coalition government of the bourgeois Generality, whose role it is to defend "democracy." Its "socialist" decrees are merely a grudging approval to measures already taken independently by the workers. But these decrees mean **nothing** when the **only** guarantee of the socialist future lies in the preservation and extension of the power of the independent working class organs, the Catalonian equivalent of the Russian workers' and peasants' Soviets. These organs are now being gradually crushed, at first by being subordinated to the old (that is, the bourgeois) state machinery. That reactionary, anti-revolutionary process against which Marx and Lenin warned so eloquently in their time, is openly justified by the P.O.U.M. chiefs.

"It is evident from this short description of confused responsibility," they write, "that the period of dual power, so essential in the pre-revolutionary and early revolutionary phases, had outlived its usefulness and was leading to confusion and needless duplication." (The SPANISH REVOLUTION, Oct. 28, 1936).

Therefore? Dissolve the bourgeois government of the Generality, the old state machinery, which is "needlessly duplicating" the government of Anti-Fascist Militia? A Marxist would think so, but not the P.O.U.M. spokesmen. "In its last session on October 1, the Central Anti-Fascist Militia Committee decided to disband, thus giving its sanction to the new Council of the Generality." (*Ibid.*)

Thus are the Catalonian workers' councils gutted, just as the German Workers' Councils of 1918 were finally incorporated into the Weimar Republic and killed. Assisting in the work this time, is the P.O.U.M. leadership which continues to proclaim its desire "For the Socialist Revolution, not Bourgeois Democracy"; assisting also, it goes without saying, are the social democrats and Stalinists; among them, too, the doctrinaire anarchist leaders who have turned a new, and very respectable leaf.

* * * *

It is not excluded that, despite this lamentable record, the P.O.U.M. will yet succeed in redressing its course and becoming the rallying ground of the truly consistent and revolutionary movement in Spain, or at least, a great

contribution towards such a movement. But this presupposes a drastic revision of its present course.

The Stalinists, in their own way, are trying to "revise" the P.O.U.M. Criminal—and horrible to contemplate—are the hooligan raids on P.O.U.M. headquarters by armed Stalinists, as well as the recent Stalinist demand for outlawing the P.O.U.M. press as "counter-revolutionary." If the term applies at all, it applies of course to Stalin's Spanish agents. We have no such contemptible and characteristically Stalinist "revision" in mind, it goes without saying. But unless the P.O.U.M. takes measures to alter its position in favor of that line of policy which made possible the victory of the Russian working class in October 1917, it will pass into history as the incarnation of disappointed hopes.

Arms for the Spanish Workers!

Only the International Workingclass Will Send Arms

BY FELIX MORROW

HITLER and Mussolini's recognition of Franco's forces means that two of the most powerful capitalist governments of Europe have irrevocably tied their fate to that of Spanish capitalism. The decisive defeat of Franco now can only mean, at the very least, a defeat to the prestige of Berlin and Rome such as has never been accepted by a capitalist government without resort to war.

It must be said in passing that Hitler and Mussolini have so far played their cards very well indeed. But only with the aid of French and British capitalism and of Stalin. For not even the adventurous capitalists of Italy and Germany would have dared this move earlier in the game. Had Spain, in accordance with the traditional rules of international law which naturally favor established governments, been able to purchase arms in the first weeks of the rebellion, Franco—whose original strategy was shattered when the proletariat of the chief cities overpowered the garrisons—would have long ago been defeated. The Soviet Union's acceptance of the non-intervention pact was a blow against the Spanish workers as even the Stalinist press in Spain which, as the Spaniard says, is on the same side of the barrier as the bull and therefore cannot be as philosophical as the DAILY WORKER, had to admit. In the first three months of the civil war no arms at all arrived from the Soviet Union and, of course, nothing to this day arrives with the consent of the French and British governments. Thereby Franco, with aid from Italy and Germany, was enabled to occupy sufficient territory which, coupled with the non-intervention pact's placing of Burgos and Madrid on an equal plane, now enables official recognition with complete impunity.

If we stigmatize the crime which the Stalin regime committed against the Spanish proletariat, it is not for the sake of mere recrimination, but to emphasize as solemnly as we can the fundamental task of today and tomorrow:

Hitler and Mussolini's open alliance with Franco means that the struggle for Spain can now only be won on the international arena. The Spanish proletariat is lost without the decisive intervention of international aid.

The only International Aid will come from the Proletariat

AN ABSOLUTE pre-condition of effective international aid for the Spanish workers is to dismiss, to repudiate, the idea that the French People's Front government and the British Tory government will help.

In the four months of civil war France and Britain have indicated their unyielding position. Official recognition by Hitler-Mussolini changes nothing, but on the contrary will, if possible, harden the present line of French and British imperialism. It is theoretically possible, were France-Britain ready to go to war and had concluded that Germany-Italy was definitely the enemy, that the French and British imperialists would make Spain the "little Belgium" issue for declaring imperialist war (this would also mean French-British intervention in Spain to insure control to the "anti-fascist" bourgeoisie). But if anything is clear in the European situation, it is that England and France are not prepared for war (England needs two years to complete her armament) and that both are not convinced that the German-Italian line-up is a definitive picture of the forces which will confront them in the next war. Italy is being assiduously courted by both France and Britain. Both undoubtedly plan to employ the technique traditionally associated with localized wars since the Congress of Vienna: diplomatic intervention after the fight is over to protect their interests. Capitalist politics is not based on pique: Franco (especially since Britain's vassal, Portugal, has rendered him such generous aid) would scarcely be likely to break the long-standing economic ties with England and France, particularly since these countries are Spain's largest market for agricultural products. No, aid from France and England for the anti-fascist cause is simply out of the question.

This is true quite independently of the fact that capitalist France and Britain prefer a victory for Franco rather than the possibility that the victorious workers and peasants—in spite of Communist and Socialist leaders' declarations for the maintenance of the bourgeois republic—will go forward to the Federation of Socialist Republics of Iberia.

Pathetic Hopefulness of Stalinists

Four months of the civil war should have convinced those who, like the Stalinists, having left the moorings of Marxism and hence incapable of predictive analysis, had any illusions about help for anti-fascist Spain from capitalist governments.

The embattled workers' militia will get help from the international workingclass, and from it alone.

But far from becoming more realistic, about this question, this key to the Spanish situation, the Stalinists have lost their heads completely. The false policy pursued by the Stalinists these four months has left them and the Spanish masses more isolated than ever. But the Stalinists behave like men gone mad with desperation and seize at non-existent straws. I take space to cite two fantastic instances out of many:

When Roosevelt (whose most solid backing came from the Curley, Farley, Tammany and other machines openly committed to Franco, not to speak of the class character of the Roosevelt administration!) was elected, the Stalinists said:

"Though the Spanish civil war was not a direct issue in the election, the Roosevelt administration cannot overlook the implications of the defeat administered to the American accomplices of the Spanish rebels.

"That vote should be regarded as a mandate to throw the weight of America's influence on the side of Spanish democracy as a means of defending world democracy and world peace." (DAILY WORKER editorial November 6, 1936).

And when American imperialism, in a bold and grandiose move against European and especially British imperialist interests in the Western Hemisphere, prepares the Buenos Aires Parley:

"That conference can become one of the most powerful forces to block the fascist drive to a new world conflagration.

"The Inter-American Peace Conference must act to stay the bloody hand of Hitler and Mussolini.

"By warning the fascist powers that the United States is ready to act with all forces standing for peace, with the Soviet Union, France, China, the small nations threatened with the Soviet Union, and with the League of Nations, as well as the people of Britain and other countries who so earnestly desire peace, the fascist bandits can be stopped in their tracks." (DAILY WORKER editorial, November 19, 1936).

The hysterical syntax is appropriate for this raving. Are the Stalinists fools enough to believe this farrago of nonsense? Or are we witnessing a frenzied attempt to cover up a plan to leave the Spanish workers in the lurch, and to blame the capitulation on the "failure" of the "democratic" countries to come to the aid of Spain?

We must repeat, until we reach every worker befuddled by this Stalinist clap-trap, that **no big capitalist government will aid the Spanish people**. Only the aid of the international workingclass is available. And that aid cannot be organized, cannot be developed, until the proletariat clearly understands that only proletarian aid is possible for Spain.

Arms the Essential Need

The only real material aid to the Spanish masses is to provide them with arms. The horrible irony of Irún must not be repeated: workers with empty rifles, all cartridges exhausted, waiting until the fascists would discover the

situation and advance and execute them, while they watched the cars rumbling over the Behobia bridge, filled with food, tobacco and candy sent by anti-fascist funds. Spain has enough food to last for some months; but at the best, with the aid of the world proletariat organized and functioning, the anti-fascist forces can hope only to keep the gap from widening too much between the armament of the Franco forces and that of the masses.

Already, and especially in the revolutionary atmosphere of France, determined groups of workers are purchasing or in other ways securing arms (the workers in the munitions factories, the arsenals and in transportation of the arms which France is feverishly producing, are among the most class-conscious and courageous in the country). Among them are Communist workers, and we do not mean by this that the leadership of their party is hostile to their work. But to leave the securing of arms for Spain in such a conspiratorial atmosphere means to prevent the possibility that arms from the workers become an important source of military supplies for Spain.

Difficulties Can Be Surmounted

Naturally the **technical** aspects of securing arms for Spain must remain—especially with the methods involved in the work of the French comrades—a closely-guarded secret. But the **political** campaign must be openly developed in meetings, factories, the press, in the streets, wherever one can find the masses. The slogan "Arms for the Spanish People," explicitly amplified to mean that "The Spanish People Can Get Arms Only If the Workers Will Provide Them," must become a mass slogan, must reach millions upon millions. Out of those who are reached by this slogan will come, not only funds of such huge proportions as will make ridiculous the present humanitarian-level collections for food, but also—and this refers to America as well—the highly-skilled technicians, so desperately needed to serve in the workers' armies. A serious organization of advanced workers, with numerous contacts in every city and district, will find many ways at its disposal for testing the integrity of technicians offering their aid. In a country like France, with its vast workers' parties, it would be a simple task to organize committees of factory workers known to each other and together knowing hundreds and hundreds of others, and thus protect their work against enemy agents. While not so easy in America, the fundamental process would be the same. If we show that we mean business, friends will turn up everywhere with information on where and how arms can be purchased. The traffic in arms goes on both here and in South America on a vast scale. It can be turned to use for the Spanish workers. But only if we rally great masses behind us. And that can be done only by a public, programmatic propaganda and organization for arms for the Spanish workers, which can in no way be confused with the necessary, carefully guarded, technical arrangements.

Undoubtedly there will be strong resistance from all capitalist governments against "their" workers organizing arm shipments to Spain. Workers will be learning how to organize revolutions! Even if, in a given country, the revolutionary situation may not materialize for a generation, this is far too valuable a field of training for any capitalist government to permit it to develop without hindrance. From this perfectly understandable situation, however, one cannot draw the conclusion that the arms campaign cannot be public in the sense we have above outlined. Some leakage is bound to occur in any large-scale activity; if it were being conducted secretly—that is, without rallying large masses to the support of the principle involved—governmental suppression would be enormously facilitated.

Precisely when the funds will be collected out in the open, as a right and duty of all workers and serious anti-fascists, precisely then will governments hesitate to take actions for outright suppression of the movement.

French Workers Must Take Lead

It is to the French workingclass, far more than to the workingclass of any other capitalist country, that the Spanish masses look for such support. We in America, the workers of Mexico, England, Belgium, Scandinavia, etc. can do a great deal if we take the task seriously. But France is in a revolutionary situation, where organization of the factory workers has increased more than five-fold in the last year, with the morale and fighting mood of the workers surging forward. What a revolutionary party could do in France for the Spanish proletariat! The Communist party's "demand" that the government come to the aid of Spain evokes little response among the non-Communist workers: Blum is able to convince them that governmental intervention means war, while the Socialist party functionaries in closed-party meetings get down to cases and tell their members that the C.P. slogan is a Russian trick to force France into war with Germany. But to the slogan for working-class organization of arms shipments, even the preponderately white collar and governmental employees of the S.F.I.O. would respond with all their energies.

Were the Communist party, with its vast apparatus and its great following among the workers in heavy industries, to raise this slogan, the S.F.I.O. could refuse collaboration only at the peril of losing its militant elements to the C.P., while even those who would remain would collaborate in the factories, etc. Committees of democratically-elected workers in factories and shops, ports and railways, could be established almost over-night; they could be joined together in local centers and finally in a national center. This powerful network, pulsing with the vast energies of the proletarians and sympathizers it directly represented, could answer governmental attempts at interference by political strikes and demonstrations on a scale which would surpass even the recent mass movements. It would concretize the fight against governmental interference by careful preparation of an open shipment of caterpillar trucks, for example; choose one of the ports like Brest, overwhelmingly revolutionary in its proletarian temper for a test-case. In the process of developing such a vast movement of aid to Spain, the French proletariat would take a gigantic step forward on the road to their own developing revolution!

The Soviet Union: Integral part of the World Proletariat

AFTER nearly four months of hesitation, the Soviet Union has sent arms to Spain. We are not revealing a secret unknown to the world. Indeed, no one is boasting more loudly of the Soviet's shipments than the Communist party press in Spain. If we do not join them in their jubilation, it is because, firstly, we see no cause for congratulating the Soviet leadership for tardily making a beginning at a task which it is bound to carry out by the most elementary notions of duty. The constant din about proletarian solidarity in defense of the Soviet Union appears to assume that proletarian solidarity is a one-way process—toward the Soviet Union but not from it. Secondly, since the fourth month of the Spanish civil war no more propitious than the first month for sending arms—far less propitious, in fact, since the non-intervention pact was not then in existence—it is obvious that the Stalin leadership did not move entirely of its own volition. Not

the least goad was the sharp criticism of the Spanish workingclass organizations. In the last weeks prior to the first shipments, the powerful press of the Anarchists, Syndicalists and Party of Marxist Unification campaigned vigorously on this issue. Thirdly, has the Stalin leadership made a "token payment" or does it intend to systematically supply Spain to the best of its capacity? We fear that the answer to this basic question is by no means as yet certain.

Revolutionists do not ask that the Soviet Union take the initiative in an open race to supply arms. Having made its first terrible error of joining the non-intervention committee, the Soviet Union cannot be the first to withdraw. But it can do what Germany and Italy are doing: sit in the committee and nevertheless ship arms systematically.

But will this not lead to war, and is the Soviet Union in a position to fight? This argument may be plausible to those "friends of the Soviet Union" to whom Marxism is an alien quantity, but the most elementary Marxian analysis will demonstrate the falsity of this question. We Marxists know that wars are not occasioned by "incidents." They arise out of fundamental conflicts among the imperialist nations for markets, raw materials, etc. and—since the existence of the Soviet Union—the irreconcilability of capitalism with socialism. If a group of capitalist nations (Germany-Italy, etc.) are now ready to wage imperialist war against the Soviet Union then they do not require Spain as a pretext: we have only to remember that the Agadir incident of 1911, the Balkan war of 1912 and so many other propitious moments were not the occasion for war but when one camp was ready, in 1914, a prince's murder was the "cause." If the German-Italian imperialists are ready, they will war against the Soviet Union anyway.

Stalin's "Breathing Space"

There is, however, a kernel of truth in the Stalinist argument. A kernel, however, that when brought to light reveals the anti-internationalist character of Stalinism. What is true is that, if the Soviet Union refrains from supplying arms to Spain, then Germany-Italy will (assuming they are actually ready to war against the Soviet) refrain from declaring war for just so long as it will take them to destroy the Spanish proletariat! In other words, they will delay war against the U.S.S.R. for some months.

Will those months constitute a "breathing space" for the Soviet Union? No! In actuality the war against the Soviet Union is going on already. For the Spanish proletariat constitutes a bulwark defending the Soviet Union. The destruction of the Spanish proletariat, a fate which is absolutely certain if the international proletariat and its Soviet section does not come to its aid, will leave the Soviet Union just so much weaker. This is the stark tragedy of the Stalinist policy: it is the policy of a solidified bureaucracy, which has become alien to the world revolution; which fears for its own status in the event of an extension of the revolution and the consequent quickening of the Soviet workers; which puts its faith not in its only real ally, the international proletariat, but in its manouevres and combinations with capitalist "allies." Yet this policy endangers the very existence of the Soviet Union itself. The "breathing space" secured by taking the French proletariat, straining toward the revolution, and handcuffing it to the bourgeoisie, and the bloodcurdling possibility that a like "breathing space" may be sought by abandoning the Spanish proletariat to the fascist wolves—these are Pyrrhic victories. A few more, perhaps one more, perhaps this very Spanish "breathing space" if the Stalinist bureaucracy dares to do it—and the

Soviet Union may cease to exist altogether as a consequence.

Certainly the Soviet Union confronts many technical difficulties in aiding Spain: the distance, the lack of Soviet ships, etc. But these can be dealt with if its leadership first decides that it **should** help. Trusted revolutionary sailors and officers can be gathered from other countries, boats flying foreign flags chartered, etc. etc. Even if war does break out, the Soviet Union, repudiating bourgeois notions of prestige, could simply defend her well-fortified borders and continue shipping under flags of friendly nations. The technical question of **how** is secondary to the political question.

Under the inspiration of a Soviet policy of aid to Spain, which can only have meaning if simultaneously the Communist parties abandon their mad policy of demanding Spanish aid from capitalist governments, the world working class would experience a tremendous rebirth. The powerful resurgence of the international proletariat would provide the Soviet Union with a loyal, fearless defense such as no capitalist "ally" will give her for a single day.

International Aid Requires a Revolutionary Policy in Spain

AID from the Soviet Union and the rest of the proletariat can only be effective, however, if the Spanish workers pursue a revolutionary policy in their struggle against fascism.

The latest-model People's Front governments now reigning in Madrid and Catalonia are bourgeois governments. That a majority of the cabinet ministers belong to workers' organizations does not change the class nature of these governments. On the contrary, it is precisely since these majorities were established, thereby resuscitating the prestige which these governments had lost by their cowardly and treacherous behavior in the first days of the civil war, that the "dual power" of the workers has been almost entirely liquidated. The remnants of the notorious Guardia Civil, a body of men trained for generations in hostility to the workingclass, simply had its name changed to the "National Republican Guard" and is being rapidly expanded by careful recruiting under Guardia Civil officers. The workers' militia, which has its own elected worker-officers and treated regular army officers as mere technicians, has now been militarized, subjected to the Military Code, and attempts are being made to transfer all authority to regular army officers. Compulsory mobilization of all able-bodied men into regular army regiments is now taking place. Thus all the armed forces are being gathered into the hands of the "republican" military caste, that is to say, of the bourgeoisie.

If this trend continues it may lead to catastrophe. Like the "democratic" bourgeoisie of Germany, Italy, Austria, which quickly made their peace with fascism, bowing to the capitalist decision that fascism was necessary, the democratic politicians of Spain—Azaña, Companys, Barrios, etc.—actually attempted to make their peace with the Spanish fascists. As I have described elsewhere* this treachery was only prevented by the independent uprising of the workers. Surrounded by the armed proletariat, with the real power in the hands of the workers' committees, Azaña & Co. began singing a different tune. But if these politicians succeed in gathering back into their

hands the power they lost on July 18, then they will again offer a deal to Franco. The only way to prevent that is for the workers to secure control, through factory and combatants' democratically-elected committees, over the foundations of state power.

Moreover, political collaboration with the "democratic" bourgeoisie has prevented the workers from using the revolutionary weapons available for rallying the most backward sections of the masses in the anti-fascist regions and for driving a decisive wedge between Franco and the Moors and peasants: a general decree confiscating all landed estates, empowering their division by peasant committees, and guaranteeing permanent occupation of the land without compensation; decreeing the complete independence and freedom of Morocco and an alliance between the Spanish workers and peasants and the Moorish people; genuinely democratic rule of Spain through a National Congress of Workers, Peasants and Combatants' Deputies; confiscation of all big enterprises and guaranty of jobs to all. What irony, that Franco has demagogically promised land to the peasants and autonomy to Morocco, while the Madrid government has remained silent!

Stalinists Corrupt Workers' Organizations

The Stalin regime bears considerable responsibility for the reformist policy of the Spanish workers' organizations. When—at the celebration of the anniversary of the Russian Revolution!—Consul Antonov-Ovseenko declared, "Long live the Catalonian people and its hero, President Companys," he was putting an official Soviet seal of approval on the policy of subordination to the "democratic" bourgeoisie. The most persistent advocate of this policy is the Spanish Communist party, and its press makes clear, in no uncertain terms, that behind it stands the Soviet Union. Caballero enunciated a policy of making the proletarian revolution simultaneously with fighting the civil war, before he became Premier; without white-washing his responsibility for reversing himself, it is undoubtedly that he was subjected to Soviet pressure. After Soviet arms began to arrive the Catalonian Stalinists secured a pact with the Anarchist National Confederation of Labor, which wipes out the last vestige of the proletarian policy previously enunciated by the C.N.T.

The international workingclass must fight against this policy, which can only lead to defeat of the Spanish masses. We can and must urge upon our Spanish comrades the absolute necessity of a revolutionary course.

We can secure a hearing, we can lend conviction to our urging, only if we show that we mean business: that means immediate launching of an effective campaign of shipping arms to the Spanish people. Nothing can more quickly convince the Spanish workers that their struggle is a struggle of socialism against capitalism, than the contrast between the embargo by the "democratic" governments and effective aid from the world proletariat.

The Socialist party in America can and should play the leading role in initiating the campaign for armed aid to the Spanish people. We need not pretend to more numerical strength than we possess. But we can be the vanguard of a powerful, effective movement. The way to begin is to begin. We have no other alternative if we seriously desire to support our Spanish comrades. The struggle against fascism today centers in Spain and is an armed struggle. We must enter the struggle and employ the weapons which can bring victory. Arms for the Spanish Workers! Only the International Workingclass Will Send Arms!

* "The Civil War in Spain," Pioneer Publishers, 100 Fifth Ave., New York.

Reactionaries Triumph — Only in Tampa

BY ARNE SWABECK

NOVEMBER third recorded an almost unanimous labor vote for Roosevelt. Three weeks later the A.F. of L. convention at Tampa, Fla., brought its long-standing conflict to a close by an irrevocable split. These two events, opposite in nature, reflect the contradictory tendencies in the labor movement today. Future developments will no doubt bring out the full implications and show the far-reaching consequences.

But how is the existence of the opposite tendencies, which these events seem to portray, to be explained? On the one hand there was an apparent unanimity of political choice. On the other hand there is an irreconcilable division into two conflicting camps, mutually recriminating and mutually hostile. Is this a case of the division being more apparent than real; or is it the other way around, namely that the unanimity of political choice was more apparent than real? These questions cannot be answered by a simple yes or no. Insofar as the split is concerned little doubt is possible. When it is presented in its most simplified form of a struggle between craft union supporters and the champions of industrial unionism, the distinction is clear. The antagonistic forces, the A.F. of L. and the C.I.O. stand out equally clear. It need not follow that there should also be a conflict about the support of Roosevelt, and there was none. Nevertheless a differentiation of political methods is now arising between the two hostile camps. A comparison of the attitude displayed by both sides during the election campaign and the attitude to the outcome of the election will make this abundantly clear. There is no unanimity in regard to the time honored non-partisan political policy practiced by the labor lieutenants of capitalism over a period of decades. The C.I.O. leaders have become distinctly partisan. Moreover, headed by John L. Lewis, they are departing from this policy and moving in the direction of tying up the trade union movement more closely with the capitalist political state.

Lewis and his associates took an especially active part in the drafting of the Democratic party platform. They took charge of the labor end of the party's election campaign without a selection by Jim Farley. They were the actual creators of Labor's Non-Partisan League the purpose of which was to whip the trade unions into line in the Roosevelt column. After November third Lewis hailed the accomplishments as a "magnificent victory for labor." At the same time he called upon the workers to "organize themselves to consolidate their political victory and translate it into material benefits and reforms." According to this the fruits of this victory are to come from the second Roosevelt administration.

Reactionaries at Tampa

The petrified reactionaries in control of the Tampa convention were not so exuberant. Most of them had supported the President's re-election. Most of them had supported the New Deal measures. But they took great care lest the traditional political policy of rewarding their friends and punishing their enemies among the agents of privilege be infringed upon. Such an infringement they would resent and repudiate no matter what the conditions may be. The task of organization of labor and political indorsements of "friends of labor" is to them just an everyday humdrum affair. Their political indorse-

ments had never been much more effective than their attempts to organize labor. In their own particular field they are no less reactionary than the heads of the big corporations who fight the unions most ruthlessly. Fundamentally these people are deeply convinced supporters of the celebrated bourgeois ideal of so called rugged individualism. Concessions given to the unions they are perfectly willing to reward with a political indorsement and thus endeavor to maintain what they consider to be a perfect equilibrium between capital and labor.

This reactionary character the Tampa convention reflected in every one of its important actions. It proceeded to unwind the history and growth of the labor movement, its sacrifices and its struggles, in reverse form. But it was on the defensive, almost to the point of futile impotence. The unmitigated arrogance displayed throughout the conflict had met a stiff challenge from the C.I.O. All hopes that a wedge could be driven in between the adherents of industrial unionism, to divide them, and thus make them submit to the Executive Council terms, had been blasted. The haughty self-confidence had disappeared. A change of tone was distinctly noticeable. Charges of fomenting an insurrection in the A.F. of L., and charges of dual unionism, were left out of the resolution on the C.I.O. that was finally adopted. However, there was no change of actual position. The hard boiled craft union officials, while put on the defensive, did, nevertheless, not relinquish their voting power. And so, by a vote of 21,679 to 2,043 the split received the official and irrevocable seal of the federation. It was the seal of its own stagnation and eventual doom. From the point of view of both internal dynamics and external policies, this convention resembled a graveyard for anything that might appear to be tinged with even the mildest form of progressivism. Indeed, the rage of futile impotence reached a climax of comedy in a prelude to the main action when the convention decided, by *viva voce* vote, to boycott the union label of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers.

Progressive Measures Defeated

Unprecedentedly reactionary measures followed in rapid succession. While the maritime workers on the Pacific Coast are fighting for the very life of their organizations, assisted by sailors on the Atlantic and on the Gulf Coasts, whose strike was perversely outlawed by corrupted international officials, the A.F. of L. convention disavowed the whole business. Bitterly hostile to any idea of militant struggle, the unscrupulous mandarins, who were in control at Tampa, couple up this disavowal with a move which at first sight would seem progressive in character. They decided to explore the possibility of the formation of a Maritime Department. In actuality, however, this represents also a defensive move that is directed against the maritime rebellion in an effort to restore and strengthen the bureaucratic control of the unions.

Of course, not all the delegates were in harmony with this stultifying quackery. Some of them proposed condemnation of Hearst and a boycott of his newspapers on the ground of anti-labor policies. But they were defeated, and, alas, in the name of freedom of the press. Resolutions pleading for elimination of discrimination among trade unions against Negroes, were unceremoniously re-

jected. And, in order to make sure that there should be no mistake about what the A.F. of L. means to do in politics, the Tampa convention turned thumbs down, in a demonstrative manner, on several labor party resolutions and reaffirmed the traditional non-partisan political policy.

No possibility of misinterpretation exists. The A.F. of L. bureaucracy does not mean to depart one hair's breadth from its long practiced class collaboration policy. Let the chips fall where they may, let the blows be struck against the trade union movement by the emboldened and aggressive forces of capitalism; it has no intention of changing its course.

But the A.F. of L. has not eliminated or even reduced seriously its contradictions of yesterday. By the convention approval of the action against the C.I.O. it has adopted a form of centralization of powers vested in its leadership which it has never been able to enforce. Its ability to do this will hardly be enhanced now. This centralization will come into conflict with its own make-up consisting of autonomous unions, not at all guided by a common line, often in jurisdictional disputes, and often raiding each others preserves. New rebellion is brewing now against the general policy and against the major convention decisions. Besides this, henceforth the A.F. of L. will face the C.I.O. in a struggle for supremacy of the movement.

Future Policy of C.I.O.

The split is consummated. The C.I.O. is now an entirely independent organization. While the A.F. of L. officialdom was busy at Tampa the former was actively engaged in campaigns of organization, laid further plans, and made new appropriation of funds to extend these campaigns. While it will not do to be too sanguine about their ability to carry out their own avowed plans, the contrast of the endeavors of these two bodies is nevertheless clear. Not to be too sanguine means not to have any expectation that the C.I.O. leaders intend to discard the class collaboration policy always practiced by all of them in common. There is no reason for such an expectation and certainly not until a genuinely progressive movement compels them to do so. Let us not forget that it was precisely the C.I.O. leaders who supported Roosevelt's re-election most ardently and most vociferously. They instilled the greatest illusion into the minds of the workers about his New Deal policy; all in all this is a reactionary position.

Contrary to the A.F. of L. bureaucracy the C.I.O. leaders have distinguished themselves by their greater resolution and their readiness to take a chance with ventures of mass organization into new fields. They are ready to tackle organization on a mass basis in the very stronghold of monopoly capitalism and to organize along industrial lines. This is the progressive feature of their position, and it offers also the richest possibilities of the development of a genuinely progressive movement. But, while the A.F. of L. bureaucracy adheres strictly to its perspective based on cooperation between capital and labor and reaffirms its non-partisan political policy, the C.I.O. leaders seek, through new political methods to establish a new equilibrium without, however, discarding the class collaboration policy. For what else can their support of the Roosevelt administration mean? No doubt was possible in their minds of the fact that he was the candidate of the present day majority capitalist party and that he is likewise the executive head of the capitalist government. Therefore the question: can this be interpreted in any other way than an attempt to tie up the trade union movement more closely to the capitalist political state?

With this end in view, Lewis called upon the workers

to "organize themselves to consolidate their political victory and translate it into material benefits and reforms." This is the slogan to organize with Roosevelt. The government will be expected to serve as labor's friend, to put the brakes on the "insolence and arrogance of citrant capitalists to grant the "material benefits and reforms." But what Lewis does not announce is, that in to hold the trade union movement in check, to prevent, or sell out, the too disturbing strikes and to forestall among the workers the development of an independent class ideology. Deprived of this development, and checked in their struggles no real material benefits for the workers will be possible.

Role of the Capitalist State

Besides, the capitalist political state is not, and can in no case be made to serve working class ends. Concessions to the workers it may grant, and then only after the working class movement, by its own determination and struggle, brings sufficient pressure to bear. And this must of necessity take on the form of a struggle **against** the capitalist state, whose real function is that of an organ of class rule. So long as the capitalist class remains in power the political state will continue to function as its main instrument of suppression of the workers.

What has been stated above in the abstract the working class may soon experience in practice, taught to them in far simpler, but also in far more telling terms. A new great strike wave is highly probable and already foreshadowed by the present maritime strike. In regard to such developments the big corporation heads have shown clearly where they stand. Why give concessions, they say to themselves, we can handle labor in our own way. We have our company unions, our blacklists and our own police. We are the strongest in the courts, and when it becomes necessary to resort to the real authoritative forces of the state we can wield it for our own purposes. These threats they will attempt to make good. With the revival of business and the return of profits and dividends the monopoly corporations become only so much more determined in their desire to defeat and smash the unions.

During his first administration, President Roosevelt succeeded, through moral persuasion and complete cooperation from all the labor lieutenants of capitalism, to strangle the auto workers' and steel workers' unions by writing into the codes of these industries the infamous "merit clause" and "proportional representation" provisions, which gave the employers carte blanche to fire workers suspected of union activity and placed company unions on an equality with genuine workers' organizations. Going beyond moral persuasion and on to more firm methods, textile strikers were herded into concentration camps by Democratic governors. These were ominous signs, portent of worse to come. Soon we will have the second Roosevelt administration. Will he be able to play a role separate from, or contrary to, that laid out for him to follow by the real rulers of America? Of course not. He will still remain the executive head of the capitalist political state.

The actual organization of the mass production industries, if it is to be undertaken in earnest may sooner than expected bring all of these issues to a head. Lewis and his associates will then enter the horns of a dilemma. The contradictions inherent in any attempt to tie-up the cause and the welfare of the trade union movement in dependence upon the capitalist political state will stand out openly and nakedly. This it is necessary for all Socialist workers to understand.

C.I.O. and Steel Workers

By B. CRANE

OVER three months ago the Committee for Industrial Organization signed an agreement with the officials of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers for the inauguration of a nation-wide drive to organize the steel industry. An initial sum of \$550,000 was raised by the United Mine Workers, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the International Ladies Garment Workers and several other unions; business offices were set up in Pittsburgh, regional offices established throughout Ohio, in Chicago, Buffalo and other key cities, and some 200 field workers were sent out to start the actual work of organization. John L. Lewis announced over a nation-wide hook up:—"Organized labor in America accepts the challenge of the omnipresent overlords of steel to fight for the prize of economic freedom and industrial democracy." The big steel drive was on!

All of us were elated by the developments, because we knew that steel could be organized and because we also knew that once strong union organization was established in the mighty Steel empire, the enthusiasm and necessary impetus would be provided for the launching of a sweeping drive to organize millions of unorganized automobile, metal machining, machine tool, rubber, textile and other workers engaged in the mass production industries, and that such an influx of new membership would almost automatically transform the whole American labor movement and bring into being a new epoch, much richer in content and one much more rapid in its tempo of development.

While the favorable moment for organization of steel workers that obtained in 1934 during the time of the formation of the "Committee of Ten" and the Rank & File Movement in the Amalgamated Association had passed, the C.I.O. nevertheless possessed the necessary resources to conclude the task undertaken successfully.

Comparison with 1919

As compared with the situation in 1919, for instance, all external advantages are with the Steel workers' Organization Committee. The political temper of the country is favorable for union organization. Production schedules were sharply tapering off at the end of the war and lay-offs were on the order of the day in the steel mills; to-day the steel industry is recording an upward swing with constantly increasing demand for steel. The old 1919 Committee started its campaign with practically no funds; great financial resources are at the command of the present Committee with an initial sum of over half a million dollars at their disposal. The danger of twenty four craft unions each bickering over their jurisdictional claims in the industry has also been eliminated by the C.I.O. in the agreement concluded to organize the steel workers into one broad union taking in all members engaged in or around the steel industry. Because of its ample resources, the present steel drive has taken on the character of a national campaign simultaneously launched in all steel cities and involving all the plants of the major steel masters. This aspect of the campaign, so necessary for the successful prosecution of the drive, the old 1919 Committee was unable to achieve because of its slender financial resources, until after a year's work.

With all of these considerable advantages that the present committee possesses over the old one, we expected

to witness a campaign that was aggressive, bold, dramatic and swift.

Dramatic Campaign Expected

Our judgment on this was based on the following major considerations: First, our feeling that the best argument, the argument most calculated to impress the steel worker, was not an academic recital of the advantages of unionism and what hours and wages the steel workers might gain if they would join the organization; or even agitational lectures reciting the tremendous wealth that is being accumulated by the steel barons through the toil of the poorly renumerated steel workers. No, the most eloquent argument was a description of the national campaign that was in progress which was rapidly organizing the steel workers in every part of the country and would in the course of the next few months, swiftly strike on behalf of the steel workers; an iron determination to build the steel union no matter what the costs or battles necessary for its achievement. What was involved here, was not just another routine attempt to bring several thousand new members into the union and set up a few more lodges; the steel workers, on the contrary, were witnessing an epoch-making "extraordinary" campaign to break the stranglehold of the Steel and Iron Institute over the lives of half a million wage slaves. In other words, **this time we mean business!**

It is obvious that all the dramatic advantages of such a campaign lie in its swiftness and boldness of approach. The longer the campaign is allowed to drag out the more time there is for demoralization to set in and for the steel companies to maneuver and terrorize their employees.

And then there is another factor. The C.I.O. still has the job of establishing itself as the leader of the American labor movement. The most eloquent argument here which would convince most rank and file unionists that the future truly lies with the C.I.O. would be to confront the A. F. of L. convention with the **actual** organization of the bulk of the workers of the steel industry. This, however, was not the case.

What has actually occurred? The Journal of Commerce spoke correctly in its Oct. 25 issue of the "slow progress of the Union drive so far." To understand the basic reasons for the slow progress of the drive we believe one must turn to an examination of the political position of the C.I.O. leadership.

Supporters of Roosevelt

As is well known, all of the unions comprising the C.I.O. are rather ardent and vociferous supporters of President Roosevelt. Hillman, speaking at a recent convention, told the delegates present that they would not be allowed to strike next year if Roosevelt was defeated for the Presidency. It seems to us an inescapable conclusion after observing the whole conduct of the drive since its inception that the C.I.O. leadership had deliberately applied the brakes on the steel campaign in order not to embarrass Roosevelt prior to the election.

The achievement of collective bargaining in the steel industry will unquestionably necessitate a general strike in the steel industry with the very strong possibility that the steel strike may start off a new strike wave, which is bound by the nature of the case, to be more wide-

spread and of more virulent intensity than the strike wave that followed the setting up of the N.R.A. There is no question too, that Lewis, Murray and that whole crowd know very well the dangers of delay and of fiddling around with the work of organization. Nevertheless, the "friendship" of Roosevelt and the "gentleman's agreement" that may have been consummated loom of much greater importance in their minds than the thousand dangers that lurk when a great venture is delayed and dragged out.

The C.I.O. is not yet a stabilized body. Its progressive character lies in the fact that it has boldly proclaimed the major job of the labor movement to-day to be the organization of the key mass production industries and that it has infused the whole labor movement with the conviction that this organization work is possible of achievement, if only the attempt is made with sufficient energy and decision. The job of attracting the bulk of the mass production workers to its banner still lies before the C.I.O. At this early stage, one would expect the C.I.O. to be most militant and aggressive. But the C.I.O. leadership reveals itself to be even now an extremely conservative group with its basic policy that of class collaboration and a firm tie-up with the present system. And conservatism and class collaboration take a particularly cruel revenge upon any labor organization at the present time, when what is absolutely necessary to progress, is the militancy and the offensive that is only possible when based on an independent working class policy.

No Confidence in Lewis

These points, I believe, deserve to be especially stressed at the present time, because even among Socialists, too many young militants in the unions have become literally dazzled by the changed turn of events and confused by the more efficient and more modern tactics of the Lewis leadership. Some of the young Socialist trade unionists say: "True, Lewis is supporting Roosevelt and politically of course, that is very bad. In that sense he is misleading the workers. But as far as his trade union line is concerned, it is above reproach." The argument is false. Opportunism is like poisoning of the blood. It cannot affect one part of the organism without spreading to every cell of the body. Lewis's political opportunism has already shown its harmful effects in the present delay in the organization of the steel workers. The C.I.O. policy of class collaboration will be put to a much severer test, however, when the actual battle with the employers occurs and when all of the governmental agencies are bound to be brought into play in order to break the ranks of the steel workers.

While recognizing the progressive features of the C.I.O. and its organizing work, we must proceed from the basis that neither Lewis, nor Murray nor Dubinsky are our people or travelling in our direction; that the American trade union movement needs above all the organization of a real left wing, completely independent of the bureaucracies, unhesitatingly fighting for a consistent, clear-cut class struggle policy.

TOWARD SOCIALIST CLARITY

ALBERT GOLDMAN

After the Election -- What?

THERE are comrades who evidently consider the decrease in the number of votes received by our party, in comparison with the vote of 1932, such a serious defeat that it appears necessary to them to seek for some immediate cure, and for some strange reason they find it in a Farmer-Labor party. Mysterious indeed is it to revolutionary Marxists to explain why, after a campaign when Farmer-Laborites of every hue and description flocked into the camp of the leading New Dealer, it should be the duty of Socialists to push the organization of Farmer-Labor parties. An inability to face reality plus a terrible and needless fright are the only valid explanations.

To one who possesses the slightest ability at Marxian analysis the decrease in the number of votes for our party is not at all puzzling. Leaving all other considerations aside—such as have been mentioned in the lead editorial in this issue—the glaring fact stands out that the S.P. of 1936 is not the S.P. of 1932. A purely reformist party such as the S.P. was in 1932 is much more likely, in non-revolutionary periods, to receive a comparatively large vote than a revolutionary party. I do not claim that the party is at present a revolutionary party but compared with 1932 its fundamental approach is considerably closer to revolutionary Marxism. In fact it was the only party which, during the campaign, stressed the fundamental alternative facing the present epoch: SOCIALISM versus CAPITALISM.

In 1932 every liberal voted for the Socialist ticket because the Socialist party stood for a peaceful and gradual

change of the capitalist system. The Roosevelt myth was not in existence and every worker who wanted socialism but was not convinced that it was necessary to struggle for it voted the Socialist ticket. Now these same liberals and workers see a much better chance of getting the reforms they want by voting for Roosevelt. And a great many of these liberals and workers realize that the Socialist party has changed and they are not ready as yet to accept that change.

It would be extreme folly for us to create an illusion that the working class will follow us immediately upon our becoming a revolutionary party. Under certain circumstances the contrary may be true. A party passing through a transition period such as confronts the Socialist party, will of necessity lose a great many supporters who wanted the old and not the new party. It is not enough to change a declaration of principles; it is not even enough to become very active in the class struggle, as is absolutely necessary. There must in addition be the element of upswing in the labor movement before our revolutionary approach and our active participation in the struggle bear fruit in the form of millions of votes.

If we could only say that the campaign as carried on by our party educated our own party members, consolidated our ranks, and succeeded in educating the advanced workers then we could pronounce the campaign an unqualified success regardless of the number of votes. Such was the situation in our party and in the labor movement that no one had the right to expect anything but an educational campaign.

It would of course be improper in a public organ to

attack those who were responsible for the serious defects in the conduct of the campaign. We hope to be able to be more explicit in a special number of the APPEAL which will be circulated amongst party members only. Here we can say that the critique of Roosevelt and his New Deal and the emphasis on the idea that not bourgeois democracy but socialism is the goal of our struggles, correct and necessary as they were, could not of themselves be sufficient. It was necessary to take advantage of the important events of the day to educate our own members and the advanced workers through an analysis of those events from a revolutionary standpoint and to show by such an analysis that we were correct as against all other parties and tendencies. It is enough to state, that outside of a few pamphlets by comrade Thomas in which he gave an excellent critique of the New Deal, there was not a single pamphlet on any important current event, to show that our campaign was too abstract to be of any real educational value. To put it bluntly our campaign literature was practically non-existent and whatever there was of it, outside of the Thomas pamphlets, was atrocious.

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But to come back to the original question. Why the sudden interest on the part of some leading comrades in a Farmer-Labor party; why the overwhelming desire to call a convention to change the Cleveland resolution on the Farmer-Labor party?

I am not overstepping the boundaries of propriety when I divulge the fact that there is a minority of the party that is opposed to the Cleveland resolution. As a minority these comrades, believing in the necessity of a disciplined party, do not oppose the resolution except in inner party discussions. But it is not at all opposing the Cleveland resolution to say that the sudden campaign which leading comrades have initiated for the purpose of calling a convention to change the Cleveland resolution is a very dangerous move from the point of view of building the Socialist party. For it is obviously the intention of these comrades anxious to change the Cleveland resolution to do so for the worse and not for the better. That is, it is their intention to alter it so that more freedom can be given sections of the party anxious to create some kind of a Farmer-Labor party concoction.

What is there in the present situation that demands our active attempts to create Farmer-Labor parties? It has been pointed out by various comrades that the chances for a national Farmer-Labor party are slimmer now than they were before Roosevelt's election. There is in actuality no real move to create a national Farmer-Labor party. Why the rush then? Even assuming that local Farmer-Labor parties are about to spring up everywhere the Cleveland resolution is a sufficient guide for our leading bodies to act.

No revolutionary Socialist is opposed to a convention but at the present moment a convention should be called, if at all, to lay down those principles which will make possible the building of a revolutionary Socialist party and not to throw our efforts into the creation of local Farmer-Labor parties. Any analysis of the election and the part which the Socialist party played in it which ends with a note on the necessity of building a Farmer-Labor party is thoroughly opportunist and false. I must congratulate the editorial board of the SOCIALIST CALL that in the analysis of the elections in the issue of November 21, the section dealing with the tasks of the Socialist party does not mention one word about the necessity of building a Farmer-Labor party.

To take a correct revolutionary position on all the problems confronting us, national and international, to educate our members, to throw ourselves into the strug-

gles of the working class, struggles that are inevitable in the coming period—these are the tasks confronting us and not the building of local reformist Farmer-Labor parties.

The National Executive Committee will undoubtedly decide to hold a convention. The duty of revolutionary Socialists will be to make a serious effort to balk all attempts to dissipate our energies in the creation of local Farmer-Labor parties. We must see to it that the special convention will make the necessary changes to enable the party to develop farther on the road of revolutionary Marxism.

Stalin's "Gift" to the Russian People

NO PROPHETIC powers whatever are necessary to predict that the new "democratic" constitution so generously granted by the beloved leader will be approved by the delegates of the Eighth Congress of the Soviets now being held in Moscow. At the time of writing the delegates are still in the period of "discussion" but with a reckless disregard of all consequences we prophesy that the constitution will be accepted unanimously by the approximately 2500 delegates present.

"Friends" of the Soviet Union of the type of Louis Fischer and Norman Angel have claimed and will claim that the most democratic discussion ever conducted anywhere in the world was held in the Soviet Union on the question of the constitution. A glance at the type of discussion on the constitution as shown by the translations from PRAVDA in the DAILY WORKER at the time when the constitution was first proposed, should be proof enough for any intelligent person that what took place was not a discussion by political people on the necessity for the new constitution or on its fundamental principles but the giving of thanks to the beloved leader for his generosity and in suggesting some exceedingly minor and innocuous changes. No discussion on policies; only suggestions how to execute the policies.

Numerous are the gems of logic and dialectics found in the speech of Stalin explaining and defending the constitution. Interesting is it to note that Stalin spent more time in taking up the criticisms of the constitution found in the fascist press than answering the criticisms of the democratic capitalist press. It goes without saying that no mention was made of the criticism of the revolutionary Marxists. After all to answer the fascists is quite an easy job.

From the gems we shall mention the following two. According to Stalin one of the reasons why the new constitution is necessary is because "Soviet society has succeeded in creating a socialist order . . . and that the fundamental principle of this phase of Communism is the formula: 'From each according to his abilities; to each according to his deeds'." It is true that Lenin in distinguishing socialism from communism stated that the above principle was characteristic of socialism but it would be utterly absurd to contend that the mere existence of a state of economic development where such a principle was recognized meant that socialism had been achieved. That principle was recognized and necessarily so in the years before the Five Year Plan was in effect but not even Stalin asserted that socialism was in existence then. No justification for the new constitution is possible by simply stating that socialism is in existence and to prove that by quoting a phrase from Lenin.

Some critics have asserted that the constitution is meaningless because no opposition parties will be tolerated and consequently there can be no real democracy. To that Stalin answers from the heights above and with

perfect logic: Parties can exist in a society where there are hostile classes. There are no hostile classes in the Soviet Union. Therefore no other party outside of the Communist party. (Stalin of course assumes that even a Communist party exists in the Soviet Union, which is contrary to the facts.) If one is so ignorant of the fundamentals of Marxism as to accept such childish twaddle then he will accept Stalin's premises and also his conclusions. Assume that there are a few thousand workers who would like to create a new party in the Soviet Union. They will then find out in the concentration camps in Siberia and in the different jails that they were incorrect in their attempt because they did not understand Stalin's system of sociology.

Democracy now has reached its zenith in the Soviet Union under the regime of Stalin. Whereas before, democracy was limited only to workers, at present all other sections of the population will be the beneficiaries of Stalin's democratic processes. The tragic truth is that the workers have lost all their democratic rights and the constitution will not bring those rights back to them. Freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of the press are all guaranteed by the new constitution just as they were in the old constitution of the Russian Federated Soviet Socialist Republic. Alas, those guarantees are meaningless. There will be freedom of speech, of press and of assembly only for those who submissively proclaim the greatness of the beloved leader.

The victory of the working class in November 1917 was justifiably expected to usher in a new epoch when the contrast between fact and theory ceased to exist. Under capitalism that contrast must inevitably stare one in the face. All the grandiloquent phrases of declarations and constitutions are belied by the facts of capitalist society. Falsehood is at the bottom of that social system. It is inconceivable that socialism should be based on falsehoods.

In the Soviet Union at the present time the contrast between theory and reality is greater than it has ever been at any time in human history. And necessarily so. Because in spite of everything, the foundations of the October Revolution, in the sense that the means of production have been taken away from the capitalists, are still intact. The Stalinist bureaucracy, in order to prevent

the workers from throwing the bureaucrats off their backs, must speak in socialist terms when in fact there is no socialism. In the midst of a very low standard of living Stalin announces that "poverty has been abolished"; while old Bolsheviks are being executed he proclaims that there is freedom of assembly; while thousands of the best working class elements are in Siberian exile and in jails for daring to remain true to the traditions of October Stalin assures us that there is freedom of the press; while the most dastardly accusation is levelled against the leader of the October uprising to the effect that he is in league with the chief fascist enemy of the Soviet Union, Stalin boasts about freedom of speech.

No, comrades, under socialism there could be no such terrible contrast between theory and reality.

Labor Action

CONGRATULATIONS to the Socialist party of the State of California. At a time when a great many sections of the party are discouraged by the "defeat" of the party in the elections, the comrades of California undertook a tremendous task in launching a weekly paper, an official organ of the party. And the first issue of LABOR ACTION is proof that it will be a Socialist paper, an organ that will give expression to the revolutionary spirit of the working class. One can safely say that it will play a tremendous role in the building of our party into a revolutionary Marxist party; it will attract to our ranks the most militant workers; it will educate those workers in the principles of revolutionary socialism.

Support LABOR ACTION,—another member in the family of revolutionary Socialist organs. Send your subscription and contribution to LABOR ACTION 628 Montgomery St. Room 334, San Francisco, Calif.

Socialist Call

AND while we are on the subject of socialist organs, did you notice the tremendous improvement in the issues of the CALL beginning with the issue of Nov. 21st? The new editors evidently understand that a Socialist paper is not simply a scrap book of information with a reformist slant. We hope the improvement is lasting.

Committee Formed to Obtain Right of Asylum for Trotsky

(Reprinted from the SOCIALIST CALL)

The American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky has been organized to help obtain for Trotsky his rights of asylum and to aid in the formation of an International Commission of Inquiry to examine all the available evidence in connection with the Moscow trials.

The following statement has been issued by the Committee, of which Norman Thomas, John Dewey, Freda Kirchwey, Suzanne La Follette, Devere Allen, Edmund Wilson, Louis Adamic, Prof. E. A. Ross of Wisconsin University, Joseph Wood Krutch, H. M. Kallen, James T. Farrell, Prof. Wm. H. Kilpatrick of Columbia U., Max Eastman, Sidney Hook, Inez Haynes Irwin, James Rorty, Prof. Paul F. Brissenden, Vincent R. Dunne, John Chamberlain, Benjamin Stolberg, Louis Hacker are among the membership:

The Norwegian Government has forbidden Leon Trotsky to prosecute his libel suit against the Norwegian Communist and Fascist papers. This action is only the severest of the many repressive measures against him.

For the past two months Trotsky has been a virtual prisoner of the Norwegian police. Police guard him night and day; his mail is censored; he is deprived of all secretarial assistance. This latest order not only deprives him of the last remnants of his democratic rights of asylum but closes his last means of answering the grave accusations made against him in connection with the Moscow trial.

"The American Committee for the Defense of Trotsky protests against this outrageous violation of democratic rights by the Norwegian Government and demands that the full rights of asylum be restored to Trotsky. The most elementary notions of justice dictates that this world-famous revolutionist should be given the fullest and freest opportunity to state his case."

The committee will hold a mass meeting on Friday evening, December 18, the date on which Trotsky's term of asylum expires, at Center Hotel (formerly Hotel Delano) 108 W. 43rd Street. Suzanne La Follette will

